

By the amendment filed May 20, 2002, Claims 1-35 and 56-69 are pending in the application.

The Rejection of Claims 1, 2, 8-10, 26, 27, 35-37, 46, 47, and 55  
Under 35 U.S.C. §§ 102(a)(b)/103(a)

Claims 1, 2, 8-10, 26, 27, 35-37, 46, 47, and 55 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §§ 102(a), (b), (e) as anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as obvious over U.S. Patent No. 6,238,520, issued to Greenwood. Applicants respectfully submit that Claims 1, 2, 8-10, 26, 27, and 35 and new Claims 58-69 are patentable over the teachings of the Greenwood reference for the following reasons.

Like the Pruszynski reference, the Greenwood reference describes treating starch with a flocculent. The Greenwood reference describes using a flocculent to provide a "network flocculation", in which high molecular weight synthetic polymers (i.e., flocculents) operate via a bridging mechanism to create large agglomerates of flocculated starch particles. As with the Pruszynski reference, the Greenwood reference fails to teach or suggest a starch particle having a positive surface charge as in the claimed invention.

The Rejection of Claims 3-7, 11-25, 28-34, 38-45,  
and 48-54 Under 35 U.S.C. §§ 102(e)/103(a)

Claims 3-7, 11-25, 28-34, 38-45, and 48-54 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §§ 102(e) as anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as obvious over U.S. Patent No. 6,238,520, issued to Greenwood. Claims 38-45 and 48-54 have been canceled.

For the reasons discussed above, applicants respectfully submit that the subject matter of Claims 3-7, 11-25, and 28-34 is not taught or suggested by the teachings of the Greenwood reference. Withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

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The Rejection of Claims 56 and 57 Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claims 56 and 57 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as obvious over U.S. Patent No. 6,238,520, issued to Greenwood, in view of the Casey reference.

The teachings of the Greenwood reference are not cured by the teachings of the Casey reference. Applicants respectfully submit that the subject matter of Claims 56 and 57 is not taught or suggested by the teachings of the cited references. Withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing remarks, applicants believe that Claims 1-35 and 56-69 are patentable in view of the teachings of the Greenwood and Casey references and are in condition for allowance. If any issues remain that may be expeditiously addressed in a telephone interview, the Examiner is encouraged to telephone applicants' attorney at 206.695.1755.

Respectfully submitted,

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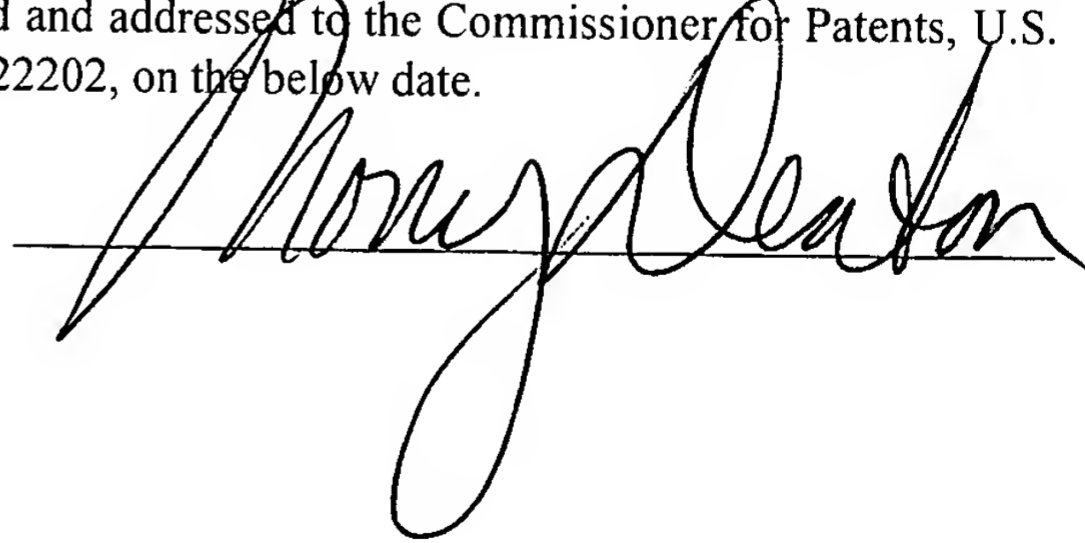
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